

limbs and felled mature trees, leaving the forest floor in a mass of confusion. This bill will provide \$48 million to the US Forest Service in order to help the states and private land owners assess the damage and develop plans for clean up and for ensuring a healthy future for the forests. In addition to general clean up, some of the trees which were felled must be harvested as soon as possible in order to retain any value, others may sit on the forest floor for a while. Maine's forest products industry is vital to the economy, and this supplemental funding will help ensure as quick a recovery as possible from the havoc wrecked by the Ice Storm.

In addition, funding is provided to help Maine's maple syrup producers. Not only did the storm do immense damage to the trees, but it also tore out the tubes which were waiting to catch the flow of sap. There is approximately \$4 million, which requires a cost share, to assist this industry in recovery efforts that will be hampered for a number of several years by the severe damage done to the trees.

The supplemental also provides assistance to Maine's dairy farmers. The ice knocked out power to more than 80 percent of the state and thousands of people were without power for up to two weeks. The lack of electricity made it impossible for many dairy farmers to milk their cows—and for those that could, the lack of electricity meant they had to dump their milk because it could not be stored at the proper temperature.

Maine's dairy farmers are family farmers. It is as much a way of life as it is a business, and the storm put a big dent in their finances. This bill provides \$4 million to help take care of livestock losses. I also supported an amendment offered by my good friends from New York, Senator D'AMATO and from Vermont, Senator JEFFORDS, that added \$10 million for milk production loss. Not only were farmers forced to dump milk, but their inability to milk impacts the production level of milk. It will take several months for these cows to return to their full production level.

I wish to reiterate my appreciation for the support that the Appropriations Committee, lead by Chairman STEVENS, has shown for the needs of the northeast states hit by the Ice Storm. His leadership has been instrumental in ensuring that Maine will be able to make a quick and full recovery from the devastation of the Ice Storm of 1998. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. STEVENS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I am authorized to state that the minority leader, Mr. DASCHLE, the leader, and I will not call up relevant amendments.

And I announce we have completed the list. There are no more amendments in order on the supplemental appropriations.

The bill is ready for third reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I now have a unanimous consent request. I ask unanimous consent that the bill now be placed back on the calendar until such time as the Senate receives from the House the House companion bill. I further ask unanimous consent that once the Senate receives the House companion bill, the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, and all after the enacting clause be stricken, the text of S. 1768, as amended, be inserted, and the bill be read for the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and S. 1768 be placed back on the calendar.

I further ask unanimous consent that when the Senate receives the House companion bill to the IMF supplemental appropriations bill, the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, and all after the enacting clause be stricken, and the text of the IMF title in this bill be inserted, and the bill be advanced to third reading and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, all without further action or debate.

Finally, I ask unanimous consent that in both cases the Senate insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes, and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate, all occurring without further action or debate.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. We are going to have a final rollcall vote on the bill; is that correct?

Mr. STEVENS. We do not have the bill here. And this enables us to go to conference on either bill immediately. The final vote on this bill will occur in a conference report in each instance.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Well, Mr. President, I shall not object as long as we will have a rollcall vote on—

Mr. STEVENS. A rollcall vote on the conference report. That is the commitment we have made.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. STEVENS. Let me thank all Members for their cooperation and assistance in connection with this bill. I, again, say that these are vital subjects to our democracy, and it is imperative that we proceed as rapidly as possible. And I appreciate the Senate giving us the authority to move immediately, when we receive either bill from the House, to go to conference with the House.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. STEVENS. I do.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for the very high degree of leadership that he has demonstrated in managing this bill. It was a difficult bill with a great number of amendments. And he has remained on the floor, worked hard, and demonstrated his characteristic fairness and objectivity throughout the work on the bill.

I thank him on behalf of the Senators and express our collective appreciation and, may I say, our admiration.

Mr. STEVENS. That comment, coming from the distinguished Senator from West Virginia, is an honor. I want to assure the Senate we would not have been able to move on this bill without the cooperation of Senator BYRD and the minority staff.

I will come back later with the thanks to all concerned on this matter, but I am grateful to my good friend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The Senator from the great State of Mississippi, Senator THURMOND.

Mr. THURMOND. I wish to commend the able Senator from Alaska for the magnificent manner in which he handled this bill. It was a complex bill, and he did a wonderful job. I congratulate him.

Mr. STEVENS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EDUCATION SAVINGS ACT FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, as most Members have been aware, the two leaders have been working toward an agreement with respect to the Coverdell A+ education bill going on a week now—13 days, to be exact. The leader regrets to inform the Senate that we will not be able to reach an agreement which would have provided for an orderly procedure to consider the bill, education-related amendments only.

Therefore, the leader notifies the Senate that the cloture vote will occur at 5:30 p.m. today and the Senate will now resume the bill for debate for 30 minutes equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2646) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax-free expenditures from education individual retirement accounts for elementary and secondary school expenses, to increase the maximum annual amount of contributions to such accounts, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, this is the fourth filibuster on this proposal.

When this measure came before the Senate last year, we were told that it was a pretty good idea but it needed to go through the process. It has now been through the Finance Committee. It now embraces many ideas from the other side of the aisle, and, of course, its principal cosponsor is from the other side of the aisle, Senator TORRICELLI of New Jersey.

It was reported out with a bipartisan vote 12-8 on February 10, 1998. Provisions have been added to the bill from Senators MOYNIHAN of New York, GRAHAM of Florida, BREAUX of Louisiana. Eighty percent of the tax relief embodied in the bill reflects amendments from the other side of the aisle.

Mr. DASCHLE. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. COVERDELL. Absolutely.

Mr. DASCHLE. I was preoccupied when the Senator made the unanimous consent request; I apologize. Was the request made for one-half hour of debate prior to the vote to be taken at 5:30, and was it equally divided?

Mr. COVERDELL. Yes.

Mr. DASCHLE. I thank the Senator for yielding.

Mr. COVERDELL. As I said, we are in our fourth filibuster. The majority leader has now offered five different proposals. I don't think it is necessary to enumerate each of the five different proposals. We have made progress, but every time, there is one more obstacle to getting to the bill and getting to it within the parameters of education debate.

If this filibuster continues, I just want to point out that about 14 million American families will be denied the opportunity to establish savings accounts that will help some 20 million children, that 70 percent of those families will be families that have children in public schools, 30 percent in private.

To hear some of the opponents, you would think this is a private education savings account. It is far from it. These families would save about \$5 billion in the first 5 years and another \$5-plus billion in the second 5 years. So we are talking about a lot of money coming to the aid of education without the requirement to raise taxes. No new property taxes, no new Federal taxes. These are families stepping forward to help their children. That will be blocked. Those millions of Americans' opportunity will be stunted.

If the filibuster continues, the qualified State tuition provision, which would affect some 1 million students gaining an advantage and more provisions when they get to college, 1 million employees will be denied the opportunity to have their employers help them pay for continuing education or fulfilling their educational needs, and 250,000 graduate students will be denied that opportunity as well; \$3 billion will disappear from the financing capacity of local school districts to build some 500 new schools across the Nation.

This is not a very productive filibuster. The American public, particularly those concerned about better education and the need for it, have this roadblock standing in front of them through this filibuster. I compliment both leaders for endeavoring to try to get this accomplished. But I think fairness has been extended. I conclude this statement by saying I think that fairness has been accorded and common sense, as well. I have to conclude we are just still in the midst of a filibuster.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 2646, the Parent and Student Savings Account PLUS Act, which will create educational choices and academic opportunities for millions of young Americans. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this measure for which my colleague, Senator PAUL COVERDELL, has tirelessly fought on behalf of our Nation's students since it was stripped from the 1997 Balanced Budget Act.

The legislation allows up to \$2,000 each year to be placed in an educational savings account, or A-PLUS account, for an individual child. This money would earn tax-exempt interest and could be used for the child's elementary and secondary educational expenses, including tuition for private or religious schools, home computers, school uniforms and tutoring for special needs.

According to the Joint Committee on Taxation, about 14 million families with children could take advantage of A-PLUS education savings accounts. About 75 percent of the families who would utilize these accounts would be public school parents. At least 70 percent of this tax benefit would accrue to families with annual incomes less than \$75,000.

The most exciting aspect of this bill is the creation of individually controlled accounts that can be used to address the unique needs of the child for whom they are created. Funds in these A-PLUS accounts can be used to hire a tutor for a child who is struggling with math, or foreign language lessons to help a child become bilingual or even multilingual. They are available to purchase a home computer or help a child with dyslexia obtain a special education teacher. In short, the A-PLUS accounts would enhance the educational experience of a child by meeting their unique needs, concerns, or abilities.

It is important to note that A-PLUS accounts would not carry any restrictions regarding who can deposit funds. However, there is a limit on the total amount which can be deposited annually into an individual child's account. Thus, deposits into the account, up to a total of \$2,000, could come from a variety of sources, including parents, grandparents, neighbors, community organizations and businesses. This provision enhances the prospect that more children could maximize this educational benefit.

This bill also contains several important initiatives which would positively impact access to higher education and school construction.

First, it would assist qualifying pre-paid college tuition plans. Currently, 21 states allow parents to pre-purchase their child's college tuition at today's prices. The A-PLUS bill would make these pre-paid plans tax free, thus encouraging additional States to create similar programs which make college more affordable for more families.

Second, this legislation encourages employer-provided educational assistance by extending the tax exclusion of employer-provided undergraduate school courses to December 31, 2002. Currently, this tax exclusion is set to expire on May 31, 2000. In addition, it would allow graduate-level courses to be included in this tax exemption.

Third, the bill would allow school districts and other local government entities to issue up to \$15 million in tax-exempt bonds for full school construction. This is an increase of 50 percent from the current level of \$10 million.

Finally, this bill allows students who receive a National Health Corps scholarship to exclude it from their gross income for tax purposes. These individuals help provide vital medical and dental services to our nation's underserved areas.

These components, combined with the A-PLUS created under this bill, will make significant strides toward improving the academic performance of our Nation's students.

Mr. President, if a report card on our Nation's educational system were sent home today, it would be full of unsatisfactory and incomplete marks. In fact, it would be full of "D's" and "F's." These abominable grades demonstrate our failure to meet the needs of our Nation's students in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Currently, the Federal Government spends more than \$100 billion on education and about \$30 billion of this is spent on educational programs managed by the Department of Education. Still, we are failing to provide many of our children with adequate training and academic preparation for the real world.

Our failure is clearly seen in the results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Over forty countries participated in the study which tested science and mathematical abilities of students in the fourth, eighth and twelfth grades. Our students scored tragically lower than students in other countries. According to this study, our twelfth graders scored near the bottom, far below almost 23 countries including Denmark, France and Lithuania in advanced math and at the absolute bottom in physics.

Meanwhile, students in Russia, a country which is struggling economically, socially and politically, outscored U.S. children in math and

scored far above them in advanced math and physics. Clearly, in order for the United States to remain a viable force in the world economy, our children must be better prepared academically.

We can also see our failure when we look at the Federal Government's efforts to combat illiteracy. We spend over \$8 billion a year on programs to eradicate illiteracy across the country. Yet, we have not seen any significant improvement in literacy in any segment of our population. Today, more than 40 million Americans can not read a menu, instructions, medicine labels or a newspaper. And, tragically, four out of ten children in third grade can not read.

Mr. President, this is an outrage. But contrary to popular belief here in Washington, pouring more and more money into the existing educational system is not the magic solution for what ails our schools.

The problem runs much deeper than a lack of funding. And the solution is more complicated.

In fact, according to the most recent studies, there is very little, if any, correlation between the amount of money spent on education and the academic performance of students. A Brookings Institute study reported that, "The Nation is spending more and more to achieve results that are no better, and perhaps worse."

Over the past decade the U.S. Department of Education has spent about \$200 billion on elementary and secondary education, yet achievement scores continue to stagnate or drop and an increasing proportion of America's students are dropping out of school. Most of our students are not meeting proficient levels in reading, and according to the 1994 "National Assessment of Education Progress," 57 percent of our high school seniors lacked even a basic knowledge of U.S. history.

I am also disturbed by the disproportionate amount of Federal education dollars which actually reach our students and schools. It is deplorable that the vast majority of Federal education funds do not reach our school districts, schools and children. In 1995, the Department of Education spent \$33 billion for education and only 13.1 percent of that reached the local education agencies. It is unacceptable that less than 13 percent of the funds directly reached the individual schools and their students.

The lack of a correlation between educational funding and performance can also be seen internationally. Countries which outrank the United States in student academic assessments often spend far less than we do and yet, their students perform much better than our students. The United States spends an average of \$1,040 per student in elementary and secondary education costs. By comparison Hungary spends \$166, New Zealand spends \$415, Australia spends \$663, Slovenia spends \$300, the Netherlands spend \$725, and each of these

countries' students performed well above U.S. students in the mathematics portion of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS.) Obviously, these countries are succeeding in providing their children with a high-quality education, and spending less to do so.

Mr. President, clearly, the Federal government has a role in the education of our citizens. I have supported many vitally important Federal programs which enhance the educational opportunities of young Americans, such as financial aid for college students, aid to impoverished school districts, and special education programs for disabled children. However, much of the Federal Government's involvement in education is highly bureaucratic and overly regulatory, and actually impedes our children's learning.

Clearly, we need to be more innovative in our approach to educating our children. We need to focus on providing parents, teachers, and local communities with the flexibility, freedom, and, yes, the financial support to address the unique educational needs of their children and the children in their communities.

For example, I see no reason why most Federal education programs should not be block-granted to States and local school boards. Such a step would provide new flexibility to parents and local school officials, and eliminate Federal intrusion in local and state education policies. Personally, I have the utmost faith and confidence in parents and educators to utilize federal education dollars productively and efficiently, and in the best interests of the children in their communities.

Mr. President, it is absolutely crucial, as we debate this and other proposals to reform our educational system, that we not lose sight of the fact that our paramount goal must be to increase the academic knowledge and skills of our Nation's students. Our children are our future, and if we neglect their educational needs, we threaten that future.

I am gravely concerned that goal is sometimes lost in the very spirited and often emotional debate on education policies and responsibilities. Instead, this should be a debate about how best to ensure that young Americans will be able to compete globally in the future. I believe the key to academic excellence is broadening educational opportunities and providing families and communities both the responsibility and the resources to choose the best course for their students.

The A-PLUS bill is an important step toward returning to parents and communities the means and responsibility to provide for their children's education. This is why I support Senator COVERDELL's legislation and will continue to support innovative, flexible programs which focus on the best interests of our children, our future.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I regret that we have not been able to find

a final and successful resolution to our discussions which have extended now over the course of several days.

I think it is important to lay out what has happened to date and where we are so everybody knows what the circumstances are. As everyone knows, the legislation came to the floor immediately and a cloture vote was filed on the motion to proceed. I supported that motion to proceed because I felt it was important that we move on to the legislation. There was some concern expressed about other unrelated matters, and so there was a divided vote on the motion to proceed, but it was an overwhelming vote.

We then got to the bill itself, and I expressed the desire on the part of many of our colleagues that we have a right to offer amendments. It was at that point that cloture was filed again, prior to the time we had the chance to offer even the first amendment. Cloture was not invoked, as the record shows. That began a series of negotiations about amendments.

As I discussed the matter with my colleagues, our list included about 32 amendments originally proposed to the bill. While that sounds like a lot of amendments, as I have noted now on several occasions on the Senate floor, it pales by comparison with regard to a similar circumstance that we had in 1992. A narrowly drafted tax bill having to do with a matter that most of us are very interested in, enterprise zones, was offered, and our Republican colleagues proposed at that time that they be granted the right to offer 52 amendments, including amendments on unrelated matters—on tractors and scholarships and the like.

We didn't offer 52 amendments; we originally suggested 32. We were told that that is too many. I went to all of my colleagues and I said, "Look, we will have to pare this down. I want to be cooperative." So we pared it from 32 down to 15. I took that to the leader and I said the one thing we really are determined not to do is to give up our right to have those amendments second degreed, but we will drop it by more than 50 percent. We will go from 32 amendments down to 15 amendments so long as we have the right to have an up-or-down vote.

They said, "Well, we will probably consider having up-or-down votes, but you have to put time limits on all the amendments." Then I went to all my colleagues and I said, "Well, you aren't going to believe this. I'm going to have to ask you not only to pare your amendments from 32 to 15, but now I'm going to have to ask you to accept time limits, and we are hoping that we can limit it to at least a couple of hours each." So it was suggested and my colleagues cooperated.

I presented that, and I reported to the leader that we had agreed to time limits. The leader then came back and said, "Well, now we have a new request. The request is that not only do we want time limits, but the amendments have to be on education. We are

not going to allow any amendments that are not related to education." I went back to my colleagues again and I said, "You aren't going to believe this, but now we have to agree to limit our amendments to 15, to limit our amendments in terms of time, and now to limit them in terms of issue." I went back again to the leader I said, "Well, I think we can do that."

He came back again and he said, "You are going to have to allow second degrees." Now they have to be second degreed. I said, "I don't know if I can do that." I went back to my colleagues again and I said, "You aren't going to believe this, but now we have to allow second degree amendments to all these amendments. Not only do you have to reduce from 32 to 15, not only do you have to allow a limit on the issue, that is education, but now you have to allow second degrees."

So on four separate occasions, because of demands from our Republican colleagues that be cooperative, I have had to call upon my colleagues to reduce the amendments by more than half, to reduce the amount of time, to allow second degrees, and not to allow any extraneous issues, even though 4 years ago when the roles were reversed they demanded votes on tractors.

So I must say, Mr. President, the record ought to be very clear about who has cooperated here, who has put out the very best effort to ensure that somehow we could bring this bill to the floor. But the bar keeps getting raised higher and higher and higher. So if indeed we are the U.S. Senate, it seems to me there comes a time when you say, what else can we do? What else is there left? We have education amendments. We have agreed to second degrees. We have agreed to even less than an hour on these amendments; now it is down to a half hour on each amendment. We have agreed to that. We have agreed now that they be limited to education. We have even cut down further the number of amendments. Yet, our Republican colleagues say that is not enough. That is not enough. Go back and do more, prove to us more that you are going to be cooperative. Make sure that you ask your colleagues for more.

I think there is a message here. The message is that nothing is good enough. Ultimately, there is no way we can satisfy our colleagues on the other side because I don't think they want an agreement. I must say that I do not fault the author of the bill. I am not suggesting he is behind this. I certainly do not fault the majority leader. I think he has made a concerted, good-faith effort to try to figure out a way to deal with this. But I must say that I hope he would say the same about me. I hope, after what I have just described, that it is clear that we have done everything I know how to do, under these circumstances, to be able to resolve this matter in a way that will accommodate both sides. But for me now to go back and say we have given our all, but now we have to even

give up education amendments—the last criticism related to me by the majority leader was that we had too many education amendments. It wasn't the issue any longer. We have given that up. Now they are saying we have too many education amendments on an education bill. So now they are asking the minority to say, OK, majority, you tell us what the issue ought to be, what the circumstances for debate ought to be, and now even whether or not we should be able to offer an education amendment on an education bill and we should accept that because we are the minority.

That is what this cloture vote is about, Mr. President. We are being asked to cave completely, to give it all up. We cannot do that. There comes a time when you have to be able to say, look, we just can't give anymore.

So I hope my colleagues will understand that. We were within, I thought, minutes or inches of reaching an agreement, in part because of the effort made by the majority leader. But we are not there now. I hope the message will be clear; there comes a time when you just cannot give anymore.

A couple of colleagues have asked to speak. I yield 1 minute to the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I thank our leader, Senator DASCHLE, for the efforts he has made to try to raise the education issue for debate here on the floor of the U.S. Senate. I think that, historically, there have been great debates on education, when we found common ground, and they were basically bipartisan in nature. It has been rare that we have been unable to at least have a good, full debate on the education issue.

It is regrettable that our Republican friends are so unsure of their position on education policy that they would deny the opportunity for a debate on upgrading and modernizing our schools, providing for smaller classrooms, improving the teachers in our country and the after-school programs.

So I say to our leader that I look forward to the time here on the Senate floor when we can have the kind of debate that I think the country wants. The country recognizes that education is the key issue for the future of our Nation, and we ought to be debating the best ideas of Republicans and Democrats alike.

Mr. DASCHLE. I thank the Senator.

Mr. President, I share that point of view. Obviously, there are a lot of areas of agreement between Republicans and Democrats. There are many things with which there are disagreements. That is really the essence of this whole debate. Shouldn't we have an opportunity to talk about some of those disagreements? But I think the record is pretty clear. After all these days, we have been precluded from offering the first amendment to which there may be some disagreement.

Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority side has 3 minutes 22 seconds.

Mr. DASCHLE. I yield 1 minute to the distinguished Senator from Illinois.

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. I thank the minority leader. I also thank the leader for his unstinting efforts to try to work out a compromise that will allow for a balanced debate about the subject matter of amendments from both sides of the aisle.

The real tragedy here, Mr. President, is that this is one of the most important issues that we will take up this year—the education of our children and how we are going to provide for the development of partnerships between the Federal, State, and local governments, and communities and parents, to provide the best possible education for the children of this country.

It is a vitally important issue going to our national security as a Nation, our future as a country. Yet, here we are in a situation in which the ideas from this side of the aisle are being shut down, are being foreclosed. We are not having an opportunity to talk about those ideas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time allocated to the Senator has expired.

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I see other colleagues seeking recognition. I yield 1 minute to the distinguished Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I thank the Democratic leader for his continued work on this issue to try to allow us the opportunity to come here to the floor to talk about the most critical issue in this country today, which is the education of our young children.

There is a very serious debate that ought to be had. Are we going to go down the road of vouchers and block grants and cutting out the Department of Education, where fewer and fewer children have the opportunity for an education? Or are we going to talk about the proposals that we would like to debate—whether or not our class sizes should be smaller, how we are going to train our teachers for the skills they need with our children in their schools, how we are going to deal with our classrooms that need school construction so badly across this country. There is a debate to be had. We are ready to join it. We want to have that opportunity, and we will stand behind the Democratic leader to be allowed to have that debate on this floor.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I may have to use a minute or two of leader time.

I yield 1 minute to the Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I, too, commend the Democratic leader for his efforts to ensure that this debate reaches the full spectrum of issues that concern American education.

I believe there is one thing we can all agree upon: The problems of American education are multiple, and to conduct

a debate that would focus exclusively on one remedy and not allow other voices, other approaches, is, to me, relinquishing our responsibility to deal principally and responsibly with education policy in the United States.

There are proposals by my colleagues with respect to class size. Again, we are seeing evidence from States like Tennessee, where it makes a real difference in performance in education. Yet, we are not allowed to talk about those issues in this debate. If we are going to approach this issue with the idea of helping American education rather than the idea of promoting one particular ideological version, we have to allow for open, robust debate that incorporates all of the amendments my colleagues are proposing. And the idea to carry on without the debate, to me, is not worthy of this body.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All of the time of the minority leader has expired.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I yield 1 minute of my leader time to the Senator from Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I thank the leader. Let me thank both leaders here. It is not an easy task to try to fashion these agreements. I sympathize in that we have spent I don't know how many days trying to work out an agreement to discuss amendments. In a sense, what the Democratic leader was trying to do was get the bill up and allow the amendment process to flow. I suspect this bill might have been dealt with after having been given a chance to raise these amendments earlier.

It may seem like it is not that large an issue to people. It is one proposal. I suspect this may be one of the few opportunities when we will get a chance to debate education this year, given our calendar. I suggest to my colleagues, Mr. President, that we are talking about \$1.6 billion that will go toward education in this case. I think having a healthy debate about where those resources go is something that the country would like to hear. Whether or not we want it to support building up the deteriorating schools that our colleague from Illinois, Senator CAROL MOSELEY-BRAUN, proposes, or deal with classroom size, which Senator MURRAY proposes, or whether or not we want to go into special education, these are legitimate issues about how you allocate scarce resources.

I applaud the efforts of our leader and, hopefully, we can get some accommodation so we can have a good, healthy debate.

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, just a little history. Before I do that, I know that I certainly have tried to work out something that Members on both sides could live with. I believe Senator DASCHLE has, too. But we have Senators on both sides who have very strong feelings

about amendments that are suggested on both sides. There are amendments on the Democratic side that other Democrats have problems with, and it is the same thing over here. There are Republican amendments that other Republicans have problems with. So we have made a sincere effort.

I remind you that we started this effort on the 13th. Maybe there is a significance to that. On Friday, March 13, we started working on this. The problem is, if you want a good, healthy debate on education, fine, let's have it. I will not play second fiddle to anybody when it comes to my concern about education.

By the way, I am a product of public education; so is my wife and both of our children. But I am worried about the quality of education and the violence and drugs in schools. But the difference is, I don't think the answers are here in Washington. Some people say, let's have everything paid for and run everything from Washington. We have tried that ever since the 1960s. The scores are going down and violence is going up.

I care about this mightily. Let's have a debate about education. We are going to have a debate about education this year—not one, but probably two or three. But some Senators say, let's open it up and have debate, let's have amendments of all kinds. That is what was going to happen. We were going to wind up debating cows. And I don't want to go off on cows because cattle are important in Mississippi. I love beef. We were going to have welfare debates and debates about everything imaginable.

That is what has happened the whole year so far. On every bill that comes up, every Senator takes advantage of his or her right and says, "I have my amendment or amendments," and they just grow like Topsy on everything.

Supplemental appropriations—a bill we should have done Friday afternoon—is still sitting around here. I am not blaming that on one side or the other. I am saying "Senators," not one side or the other. Both sides don't seem to want to get serious about resolving the supplemental appropriation bills that we have now combined into one.

But the problem has boiled down to the fact that we still have Senators insisting—"We went through this process. We don't want second-degree amendments." Some say, on the one hand, "We want to do the regular order." When we say "second-degree amendments," you say, "but not that regular order." You continue to insist on amendments that don't relate to education. Senators object to that. I have been told that we must have Senator KERRY's amendment but we cannot have Senator GORTON's amendment. I don't understand that. Senator GORTON's is education related; Senator KERRY's was not; his was on child care. We will debate that another day.

Talk about fairness. I have bent over backward, until my back is almost bro-

ken. Remember, the base bill is three-fourths a Democrat bill. I don't care because those three-fourths that the Democrats came up with are pretty good ideas—prepaid tuition for college, yes, I am for that; deductions for higher education employer-employee arrangements, hey, I am for that. That was promoted by Senator BREAU from Louisiana, Senator MOYNIHAN from New York, and Senator GRAHAM from Florida. We have the school production bond issue thing in here, plus what we sent back today is our final offer. There were 12 amendments for Democrats, 3 for Republicans. I mean, how far can I go? I was told, yes, only three. But you say, "We don't want Gorton in there." So I tried. I think Senator DASCHLE has tried. It is time that we have a vote on cloture. Maybe I made a mistake by not saying let's do it earlier, and Senator DASCHLE might say the same thing. But I think the record speaks for itself: 3 out of 4 provisions in the bill, Democrats; 12 out of 15 amendments, Democrats. I mean that is in most games—whatever it is—more than fair.

But we tried. Let's have a vote on cloture. This is a vote to get a good debate on the education provisions which Senators on both sides support. And we will see what happens and take it from there.

Mr. President, I believe we have 2 or 3 minutes remaining. I yield the remainder of the time to Senator COVERDELL, who has done a great job working through all of this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 4 minutes 15 seconds remaining.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I appreciate the efforts of both leaders.

But the point is, we are still in a filibuster. When this proposal was in the tax relief bill last year, the President said he would veto the entire tax relief bill if this education savings account was in it. Then we went through one or two filibusters. We tried to deal with it. We had a stand-alone measure last year, and then we had a filibuster attempt. And we tried to proceed to it this year. Now we are trying to bring cloture, which, I might point out, doesn't end the amendments. If you file cloture, it is a Senate rule that says you are going to confine amendments to the subject matter. When I was in the State Senate in Georgia, we had to do that on everything. It was unique that you could amend with non-germane amendments.

But that is what we are trying to bring order to. And after we have been through four filibusters, a veto threat, we become concerned that we are not in a serious effort to get to the actual education components.

It is my understanding that we have said the other side can have its own substitute, an education amendment. There has been severe resistance to non-education-related amendments, and I understand an amendment of the Senator from Nebraska is still at play.

And it is not an education amendment. It is my understanding that an education amendment on our side is being objected to. We are going to have a vote here in a minute.

I want to, in closing, stress that this is a bipartisan proposal and one of the most dogged, persistent attempts to get this legislation passed with both Republican and Democrat components. The good Senator from New Jersey, Mr. TORRICELLI—and there are a number of Senators on the other side of the aisle—a good number—who want this legislation passed; 70 percent of it has now been designed by the other side of the aisle. They want to get to the substance of the education debate—the good Senator from Illinois. If we can get to the debate, it is going to have a chance. That is an education proposal. We handle it our way; they handle it their way. We will debate it. But what we are saying is, there ought to be a debate on education. We have spent an inordinate amount of time avoiding the debate.

Mr. President, I presume my time has expired.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator presumes incorrectly. He has 1 minute and 15 seconds.

Mr. COVERDELL. In deference to my colleagues, I yield my time.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provision of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on H.R. 2646, the A+ Education Act:

Trent Lott, Paul Coverdell, Jeff Sessions, Connie Mack, Bill Roth, Judd Gregg, Christopher Bond, Tim Hutchinson, Larry E. Craig, Robert F. Bennett, Mike DeWine, Jim Inhofe, Bill Frist, Bob Smith, Wayne Allard, Pat Roberts.

CALL OF THE ROLL

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the quorum call under the rule has been waived.

VOTE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 2646, the A+ Education Act, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are required under the rule. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 58, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 46 Leg.]

YEAS—58

Abraham	Brownback	Collins
Allard	Burns	Coverdell
Ashcroft	Campbell	Craig
Bennett	Chafee	D'Amato
Bond	Coats	DeWine
Breaux	Cochran	Domenici

Enzi	Jeffords	Sessions
Faircloth	Kempthorne	Shelby
Frist	Kyl	Smith (NH)
Gorton	Lieberman	Smith (OR)
Gramm	Lott	Snowe
Grassley	Lugar	Specter
Gregg	Mack	Stevens
Hagel	McCain	Thomas
Hatch	McConnell	Thompson
Helms	Murkowski	Thurmond
Hutchinson	Nickles	Torricelli
Hutchison	Roberts	Warner
Inhofe	Roth	
	Santorum	

NAYS—42

Akaka	Feingold	Lautenberg
Baucus	Feinstein	Leahy
Biden	Ford	Levin
Bingaman	Glenn	Mikulski
Boxer	Graham	Moseley-Braun
Bryan	Harkin	Moynihan
Bumpers	Hollings	Murray
Byrd	Inouye	Reed
Cleland	Johnson	Reid
Conrad	Kennedy	Robb
Daschle	Kerrey	Rockefeller
Dodd	Kerry	Sarbanes
Dorgan	Kohl	Wellstone
Durbin	Landrieu	Wyden

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 58, the nays are 42. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk on the pending Coverdell A+ Education Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provision of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on H.R. 2646, the A+ Education Act:

Trent Lott, Paul Coverdell, Craig Thomas, Rod Grams, Chuck Hagel, Tim Hutchinson, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Mike DeWine.

Bob Bennett, John McCain, Don Nickles, Chuck Grassley, Mitch McConnell, Wayne Allard, Phil Gramm, John Ashcroft.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order. The majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, this cloture vote, then, would occur on Monday of next week, at a time to be determined by the majority leader after notification of the minority leader. I presume that will be around our normal voting time, at 5:30 on Monday.

So I now ask consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S.J. RES. 43

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 43 regarding

Mexico decertification which includes a waiver provision, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration under the following terms: The time between now and 7:25 be equally divided between the two leaders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

MEXICO FOREIGN AID DISAPPROVAL RESOLUTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, in light of the objection, I now ask the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 42, regarding Mexico decertification, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration under the same terms as described above for S.J. Res. 43.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, having just reached this agreement, I expect this rollcall vote to occur at 7:25 this evening or earlier if time can be yielded back. But the vote on the Mexico decertification issue will occur at 7:25.

I thank the leader for working with us on this, and also Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator COVERDELL. They have been very cooperative. I believe this is enough time to lay the issue before the Senate and have a vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 42) to disapprove the certification of the President under section 490(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding foreign assistance for Mexico during fiscal year 1998.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That pursuant to subsection (d) of section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291j), Congress disapproves the determination of the President with respect to Mexico for fiscal year 1998 that is contained in the certification (transmittal no. 98-15) submitted to Congress by the President under subsection (b) of that section on February 26, 1998.

The Senate proceeded to consider the joint resolution.

Mr. BIDEN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, as the manager of this resolution—parliamentary inquiry, is there a division of time? Is there controlled time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time is equally divided between now and 7:25. So roughly 1 hour—

Mr. BIDEN. Roughly an hour and a half divided equally.

Mr. President, I say to those who support the position that I will be managing, which is that we should support the President's position and not support my good friend from California,